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VELAZQUEZ

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VELAZQUEZ

Bell's Miniature Series of Painters.

Edited by G. C. Williamson, Litt.D.

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DON BALTAZAR CARLOS ON HORSEBACK.

Bell's Miniature Series of Painters

VELAZQUEZ

BY

GEORGE C. WILLIAMSON, LITT.D.

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PREFACE

I have commenced this new series with a volume on Velazquez, as I was struck by the attention that was given to his pictures at the recent Guildhall exhibition, by the desire that so many persons showed to understand the great merit of these noble works, and by the want of any hand-book that would assist them in their efforts.

The attempt is a bold one, I am aware, but I hope it will not be condemned on that account. Velazquez is so very great an artist, perhaps the noblest who ever lived, that I long to make his special qualities known to all who gaze at his pictures, and to imbue them with some of my own enthusiasm for the man and his work.

If this little treatise helps even a few persons to a better understanding of his genius and enables them to appreciate the skill and insight

with which the portraits are painted, my efforts in compiling it will have been attained.

I am greatly indebted to the various works that have been written upon the illustrious Spaniard, but I alone am responsible for the manner in which the topic is presented in the following pages, and for the opinions therein enunciated.

G. C. W.

September, 1901.

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LIFE OF VELAZQUEZ

VELAZQUEZ was born at Seville, in 1599. His full name was Diego Rodriguez de Silva y Velazquez, the name of Velazquez by which he is generally known being taken from his mother, who came of an old and noble Sevillian family. His grandfather was a Portuguese from near Oporto, but a reverse of fortune had brought the family to Spain, and there the father of the artist was born.

He was educated at the local grammar school, but at an early period of his career showed so great an inclination to become an artist that his parents allowed him to relinquish other branches of education and enter the studio of Francisco Herrara, whom his critics in later years have called "the Michel Angelo of Seville."

Herrara was, however, of so turbulent, not to say revengeful, a temper, that his scholar soon decided to leave his house, and did so, we are told, in fear of having his head broken through the fiery tempers of his master, who when roused to wrath was not able to control his actions.

Velazquez found a more congenial tutor in Pacheco, who was not only an able artist but

also a man of letters, and who, in his "Arte de la Pintura," 1649, wrote the earliest account of his great pupil which is in existence.

Pacheco was not a clever painter, but a very painstaking one, and an excellent master, and his education of young Velazquez was not without important fruit. He greatly admired his pupil and appreciated his genius, foretelling for him an important future, and giving him, after five years of labour, as a mark of his special esteem, his daughter Juana to wife.

From the teaching of these two men, fiery Herrara and placid Pacheco, together with the influence of El Greco, and of one of the Greek's own pupils, Luis Tristan, Velazquez derived his early education in the principles of art. Herrara taught him the strenuous force of limbs, the power to delineate emotion, the importance of understanding the character of his sitter, while Pacheco taught him careful and very accurate drawing, courage, diligence, application, and the art of composition. Velazquez, however, very early in his career went to a better master than either of those in whose studios he worked; he went to Nature herself, and, gifted with an unerring eye and a natural love of colour, he was able while yet a lad, to produce kitchen and tavern scenes which show a marvellous grasp of values, and of the effect of light and shade, and foreshadow the finer works which he was later on to paint.

Velazquez was not, however, to remain very

long in the city of his birth, lovely Seville. He was there for some three years, during which time his wife presented him with two daughters, one of whom died in infancy; but in 1621 the death of the king and the succession of his son, Philip IV., in his fifteenth year, entirely altered the course of the life of the artist.

Velazquez went to Madrid first in 1622, hoping to have an opportunity of seeing the new king, who, in the very earliest stages of his reign, showed a determination to rid himself of those persons who had been favourites of the late sovereign, to surround his court with clever men, and mark out his own line of action in very definite manner. Provided with good introductions, the youthful artist journeyed to the capital, but was not able, despite the kindly office of the chaplain to the royal household, who was very friendly towards him, to see the king, and, after painting a portrait of the poet Don Luis de Góngora, Velazquez returned once again to his native Seville.

He had not, however, given up his original hopes, nor had his father-in-law lost faith in him. On the contrary, so well had the portrait of the poet been received in Madrid, that hopes were rather raised than crushed, and at least by his visit the young artist had, in the court chaplain Fonseca, gained one important friend.

This friend was to prove in his second attempt successful. He spoke to the great minister Olivarez about the skill of his young *protégé*, and

Olivarez, who was himself interested in the arts and more so in any thing that he thought would be of satisfaction to his youthful king, decided to have Velazquez at Madrid, and see what sort of artist he was. Accordingly Fonseca was instructed to write to Seville, enclosing in his letter a sum of money sufficient for the purpose, and to desire Velazquez at once to present himself in Madrid, that Olivarez might see him. Pacheco, rejoicing in his pupil's success, and feeling sure of the result, decided to go with him; and the two set off on their eventful journey, which was pregnant with the greatest results for the future of Velazquez.

Arrived at Madrid, he was at once set to paint a portrait of Fonseca which might be submitted to the minister, and he succeeded well. The portrait was greeted with the greatest enthusiasm, carried off to the minister, and by him submitted to the king's brother, who at once desired that so remarkable a work should be shown to the king and to the royal household.

This was in 1623, and from that moment the career of Velazquez was decided. The king himself sat to the artist in August of that year, but this earliest portrait of those features which he was to immortalise in later years cannot now be traced, nor can the sketch be found of the English Prince of Wales, Charles I., who was at that moment in Madrid.

Velazquez was at once appointed court painter; a grant was made to him from the king's privy

purse; an ecclesiastical sinecure was given to him; a residence in the city was also provided; and it was further agreed that he should be paid a sum of money extra for every separate work which he should execute.

In the palace itself he was given a large studio, connected by a passage with the king's apartments; and here he commenced that notable series of portraits under the very eye of the king, and honoured with his special friendship, which was to render the name of the artist famous throughout the world.

The portraits painted during this first period of the artist's career were almost entirely those of the reigning family, the exception being those of Olivarez, the powerful minister who was just beginning to make himself indispensable to the king.

There were portraits of the Queen Isabella de Bourbon, of the king's brother Don Fernando, and of the king himself; but it is not easy to determine definitely which of the pictures that now remain were done at this early period of the artist's life.

In 1628 Rubens came to Madrid, in the position of an ambassador bearing letters from the Infanta Isabella, Regent of the Netherlands, with a view of concluding a treaty of peace between the courts of Spain, the Netherlands, and England. The great painter was received with much honour and distinction; was assigned an apartment in the royal palace, and a series of

portraits was commissioned from him by the king.

Philip had previously to this time been very adverse to Rubens coming on a diplomatic mission to Spain. The king possessed all the Spanish love of high rank and noble birth, and he considered that to send a mere painter, great in the pursuit of his art though he might be, to consult with him on diplomatic matters, was a grave error. He did not hesitate to lay his views before his aunt, who was ruling over the Netherlands; but she had a very high opinion of the skill of Rubens in delicate negotiation, and persuaded her nephew to receive the painter as her messenger. She gave him all the correspondence that had passed as to this proposed treaty, which Philip desired to have sent him in order that he might examine it. She informed the king that Rubens alone understood the papers, and she gave him an autograph letter to her nephew, and sent by him several portraits of herself and her family, painted by Rubens, as gifts to the King of Spain, and commissioned in return portraits of the Spanish Royal House.

Philip, whose love of art was in this way appealed to, was the better prepared to receive Rubens; and the artist himself, by his wary speech and clear insight into the difficult piece of diplomacy that he was anxious to conduct to a satisfactory conclusion, soon made himself agreeable to the king. His skill as an artist was greatly in his favour, and this, coupled with his

stately presence, his grave dignity, and his noble bearing, soon made him a favourite at the Spanish court. We know very little of his life there, as very few of the papers have come down to our time, but we do know that Rubens was greatly attracted by young Velazquez, at that time only twenty-eight years old, and spoke very highly of him, and foretold for him a most brilliant career. The paintings that the Flemish artist painted in Spain are not amongst his best works. He was too much taken up with the success of his mission to be able to give undivided attention to his art; but he and Velazquez carefully studied the masterpieces of Italian art that the king had collected, and Rubens copied many of them, and there is little doubt that the earnest desire of Velazquez to visit Italy arose through the conversation of the two painters, and the well-known profound affection that the older artist had for that wonderful country.

There is no important sign of the influence of Rubens upon Velazquez. The Spaniard was a man of profound personal genius, and was but little impressed with the robust vigour or the coarse actuality of the Flemish artist. He was not even attracted by the gorgeous and sumptuous colouring of Rubens, which probably seemed to his austere Spanish nature to be out of place and voluptuous, but he did acquire a stronger touch from Rubens, and, above all, an unconquerable desire to visit Italy.

To Italy he accordingly went, in the company

and under the protection of the great captain Spinola, who was just then being sent out to take command of the forces in that country. He carried with him many introductions to great personages, the more so as it was on a mission connected solely with art that he was travelling, and it was important that the various courts of Italy, who were accustomed to hear of such painters as Gerbier and Rubens going on diplomatic missions, should be assured that Velazquez, although in the company of Spinola, was coming to Italy only for purposes of study connected with the practice of his art. Olivarez was at that moment engaged in some difficult negotiation with his rival Richelieu, and many of the smaller courts of Italy were therefore not well favoured towards the Spanish court.

IN ITALY—RETURN TO SPAIN

THE visit to Italy was confined practically to three cities, Venice, Rome, and Naples. In Venice the artist worked hard, sketching and painting, making studies and copies of many of the more notable pictures, and being specially attracted by the works of Tintoretto.

After leaving Venice, he stopped temporarily at Ferrara and Bologna, and then went on direct to Rome. He was at first lodged in the Vatican, but afterwards had the Villa Medici granted him, and there he remained for eight weeks.

Much of his time in the Eternal City was taken up in careful study of the masterpieces of painting and sculpture, and in copying some of the greatest works, and making studies from others; but Velazquez was not idle with regard to original work, and two of his notable pictures which are still in Spain, whither they were sent from Italy for the king, *The Forge of Vulcan* and *Joseph's Coat*, were painted during this period. *The Topers* was painted just before he left Madrid, but the *Christ at the Pillar*, in the National Gallery, was probably painted in Italy, and soon after his arrival in Rome.

Velazquez fell ill in Rome, and, finding that the climate did not suit him, hastened on to Naples, to fulfil a commission which his sovereign had given him ere he left Madrid. This was to paint the portrait of the king's sister, the Queen of Hungary, who was at that time staying in Naples. This portrait, which is now in the Prado, the artist accomplished successfully.

In Naples he met Ribera, who had been studying under Caravaggio in Rome, and had finally settled in Naples, and married a rich wife there.

Naples was at that time thoroughly Spanish in its tastes and predilections, and Ribera was at the very zenith of his fame in the place. Velazquez seems to have become very friendly with the artist, and to have admired his work; but he did not stay long in Naples, and soon made his way home again, where he was received by the king with manifest delight and satisfaction

For nineteen years Velazquez remained in Spain, up to the time of his second visit to Italy, and during this time he produced a vast number of pictures. It was then that the numerous portraits were painted of that unfortunate child, Don Baltazar Carlos, whom Velazquez painted first at the age of two, and whom he continued to represent up to the time of his untimely death, in 1646, when only sixteen.

The Infante was idolised by his father, who had set high hopes upon his son, and the death of this much loved child, at Saragossa, from a chill, was a bitter trouble to the king. Velazquez painted the child when he was making his first attempts to walk, and was being attracted to move by the dwarf in attendance upon him. He painted him learning to ride at the riding school; he depicted him when he had become triumphantly successful in this accomplishment, which he loved so well, and we see him as quite a lad bravely riding along flourishing his baton. We see him in armour, we see him in black velvet, we see him in the bravest of gorgeous attire; we see him receiving the homage of his future subjects, and we see him in hunting costume; and in each case this delightful child, who had come into the world during the absence of Velazquez in Italy, and whom the master was to represent in every variety of dress, is painted with so marvellous a skill that he seems to live before the spectator, and reveals a most engaging and quaint childish charm.

It was during this same time that Velazquez painted a portrait of the queen mother, one of the king, and one of the minister, Count Olivarez —all represented on horseback, and forming, with the one just named of the heir to the throne, a series of four of the grandest equestrian portraits in the world. The one of Philip IV. was probably intended as the model for an important equestrian statue, which was contemplated at that time, but was never carried out.

We have also the portraits in hunting costume which belong to that same time, and the various hunting scenes; notably the *Boar Hunt*, in the National Gallery, which is a wonderful representation of the royal hunt in which the king so delighted, and in which he is depicted with the queen, his family, and his court, engaged in his favourite sport. Upon several occasions Velazquez was charged to depict such scenes, that the king might enjoy the contemplation of the events of the chase, upon which he loved to talk with the artist.

It was just at this period that Olivarez, in pursuit of his plan for getting into his own hands all the management of state affairs, laid out at vast expenditure the estate of Buen Retiro. He built in it a delightful house; fitted it up, provided game, and all the accessories of sport; and then presented the whole estate to the king, in the hope (which was justly founded) that the enjoyment of this property would engross most of the king's attention, and leave the crafty minister to

rule as he desired to do. Velazquez was employed to decorate this charming house with pictures, which were many of them to be of historical interest, and it is to this commission that we owe one of the world's masterpieces, to which allusion will be made in a succeeding chapter—the *Surrender of Breda*. The equestrian portraits were also intended for Buen Retiro.

It was about this time that Velazquez painted the few portraits which he executed of persons outside the court circle, all of whom were painted either by the command of the king, or by his special permission, granted as a mark of high favour. The notable portraits are those of the *Admiral Pulido da Pareja*, which is in the National Gallery; *Francisco de Quivedo*, poet and philosopher, and, when this portrait was done, secretary to the king, now belonging to the Duke of Wellington; *Martinez Montañes*, the sculptor, which is at the Prado; *Don Antonio Pimentel*, lord of the bedchamber to Philip, in the same gallery; *Cardinal Borgia*, *Bishop of Seville*, at Frankfort; *Francesco II.*, *Duke of Modena*, who was at that time visiting Madrid, and whose portrait is still in the gallery in Modena; and *Alonzo de Espiñar*, who was in attendance upon the heir to the throne, and whose portrait hangs in the Prado Gallery.

In 1634 Velazquez married his daughter to the painter Mazo, one of the most skilful of the artist's scholars, who copied his master's work with such dexterity that very often the copies were accepted

Laurent photo.] [*Prado Gallery, Madrid.*

LAS LANZAS

as originals. As Velazquez married the daughter of his teacher, so Mazo took his daughter; and the son-in-law lived to succeed Velazquez in his position at the Court, surviving him some twenty-five years. In 1644 Velazquez accompanied his sovereign to Catalonia, as the king was becoming alarmed at the rapid progress of a revolt in the northern provinces of his kingdom. At Fraga he painted another portrait of the king, and also a picture of a favourite court dwarf, called *El Primo*; but affairs of state were at length to occupy the attention of the king, who had too long left such matters entirely to his minister.

The policy of Olivarez had been an ambitious one, that of giving back to his country the pre-eminent position that she had once possessed in the councils of Europe; and his aim for that purpose was to unite all the provinces of the kingdom under one head, to form a complete homogeneous country under the king, and so to present a united front to the attacks of the enemy, which at that time was mainly the neighbouring kingdom of France.

He was, however, met by a bitter and unscrupulous enemy in Cardinal Richelieu, who had the same intention as regards France, and was aiming to make that country supreme. He it was who checkmated the work of Olivarez, stirring up conspiracy against him, fomenting the discontent that the determined minister had roused, and alternately flattering and exciting the racial antipathies of the northern provinces of the

kingdom, and arousing all the spirit of independence in the people whom Olivarez was striving might and main to bind into one harmonious whole.

In 1643 the clever designs of Richelieu were bearing fruit, and the revolt in the north, and what is now Portugal, assumed a very serious aspect. The king suddenly awoke to his danger, and, considering that Olivarez had gone too far, he determined to assert his own supremacy, and to resort to arms at once, and in future to rule alone. Olivarez fell suddenly into disgrace, and Philip banished to Zamora the strongest statesman in his kingdom, the only man who could have saved the country from the troubles that were coming thickly upon it, and whose only fault was his overwhelming desire to make his country great. Olivarez died at Zamora two years afterwards, worn out by trouble and despair.

Velazquez appears never to have lost belief in his old friend, and to have hoped even against hope that the king would see his error, and recall the minister. There was, however, all the pride of race roused in Philip. He was determined to assert his own importance; and, as he found out what influence Olivarez had exerted upon him, so he was equally determined to show that he alone was supreme in the kingdom, and too late he took the reins of government into his own hands. Olivarez was universally disliked. He had been overbearing in his determination to carry out his ends, and now that he was in

disgrace there were plenty of persons ready to see that he should not regain his lost position.

Velazquez appears to have been one of those who held to the fallen minister, to whose early patronage he had owed so much; and the king, be it said to his credit, did not visit upon the head of the artist this devotion for his fallen friend and patron.

Doubtless, however, Sir Walter Armstrong, to whose work, and to the larger one by Justi, on Velazquez, we are indebted for much of the information in these pages, has given the true interpretation of the curious change that took place in the pictures painted by Velazquez between the fall of Olivarez and the second journey to Italy. For a time there are no portraits of the king or of the royal family; there are none of court favourites; there are none of generals, or of persons in high degree. The artist was for a time not exactly in disgrace, but he was so warmly attached to the cause of a fallen man that the king could not be seen with him, and the courtiers were taking their cue from their sovereign. Thus, for a short time the artist was not popular, and to that time Sir Walter ascribes, and, as we think, quite rightly, the various pictures of dwarfs, buffoons, idiots, beggars, and labourers that form so important a section of the artist's works. To this same time we would give the two portraits of a lady with a mantilla, of which the finer one is at Devonshire House, the more finished example at Hertford

House, in the Wallace collection. The lady is evidently one of the *bourgeois* type, and not a court beauty, and the picture is one of those incomparable representations of character, united with superb technique, which the master produced at that period of his career.

SECOND VISIT TO ITALY—CLOSE OF LIFE.

VELAZQUEZ did not long remain in even temporary obscurity. The king was not a vindictive man, and was too fond of his favourite painter to be hard upon him for his attachment to Olivarez. The exiled minister was also dead by the time that the second visit to Italy was in contemplation; the queen had died, and Philip had thoughts of getting married again; and the revolt that threatened to break up the kingdom had by this time been quelled for the time. Barcelona had been taken, success was attending the army in the Netherlands, and for the moment it seemed as though the policy of the astute Mazarin, who had succeeded Richelieu, was to be outwitted by the success of Spanish diplomacy and Spanish arms.

This was the time selected by Philip to alter his palace of the Alcazar, and to rearrange its contents with a view to obtaining and hanging in the stately rooms some fine examples of the greatest Italian masters' work. Italian

decorators had charge of this alteration, and were advising the king as to what was required; but the question arose as to how the king, whose absence from Spain at that critical moment was quite impossible, was to obtain the pictures from Italy which he had set his heart upon acquiring. It was determined that Velazquez was the man to send, and he on his part, eager to see Italy again, and to be away from the Spanish court for a while, assured the king, that if he were sent, he would be able to purchase just the very works that would be most suitable for the rooms.

He started in November, 1648, travelling with the ambassador who was going out to fetch home the newly selected royal bride, an Austrian princess fourteen years of age. Velazquez went first to Venice, where he had stayed on the occasion of his former visit, and thence passed on to Bologna, over the mountains to Florence, and then to Rome, leaving that city almost immediately for Naples. Here he was able to secure many fine examples of ancient Greek sculpture, and also to visit his old friend Ribera, who was then in great distress, as his lovely daughter, Maria Rosa, had been carried off by Don Juan of Austria, the natural son of Philip IV., who had been in charge of the troops in Naples, and had taken a violent fancy for the beautiful girl.

Velazquez, after completing his business in Naples, returned to Rome, where he proposed to spend the greater part of his time. He here

obtained for the king copies of most of the great pieces of antique sculpture, and also some fine pictures; but the important event of his sojourn was the commission that the Chief Pontiff, Innocent X., gave to him for his own portrait. Fearing, it is said, that in his wanderings about, his hand might have got out of practice, Velazquez, before he attempted this work of painting the first personage in Europe, produced a portrait of his own attendant and slave, Juan de Pareja, a man who later on revealed astonishing powers as an artist, and who was given his freedom, and taken into the studio of his master as a pupil. The portrait, which now belongs to the Earl of Carlisle, was an astonishing and most life-like one. It produced a great impression on the artists in Rome, and procured for its creator at once his election to the renowned Academy of St. Luke. Even yet, however, the artist was not satisfied that he could attempt the portrait of the Pope as he wished it to be, without some other preliminary skirmishes. He made two studies for the portrait, both of them of high excellence, one of which belongs to the Duke of Wellington, and the other is in the Hermitage at St. Petersburg. Then he set to work upon the portrait itself, which is now in the Doria-Pamfili Palace in Rome, and is a masterpiece, a work of the greatest genius. The Pontiff is represented seated, and, with a wonderful courage, the artist has made all the accessories of

Anderson photo.] [*Doria Gallery, Rome.*

INNOCENT X.

the picture red, the chair, robe, cap, and curtain, although the Pope's complexion was of the same trying full colour. The result is a veritable *tour-de-force*; a picture which glows with fiery colour, and withal so stately, so restrained, so noble, that the somewhat coarse, forbidding features assume a nobility in the artist's hands, and are pregnant with force, expression and character.

Innocent X. was quite satisfied with the portrait, and loaded the artist with gifts and honour; and Velazquez insisted on being paid by the hand of the Pope himself, as his own royal master always paid him personally, and he would not permit him to have an inferior position to that of the Pope in such matters. The papal chamberlain, who was going to make the payment of money on behalf of the Pope, was therefore waived aside, and the scrupulous artist received from the Pope's hands the sum that he was entitled to for this magnificent work.

Velazquez had then to prepare to return to Spain; but the portrait had created such enthusiasm in Rome, that it was not easy for him to get away. Commissions poured in upon him, very few of which he was able to execute. He did paint, it is said, the portrait of the sister-in-law of the Pope, of Flaminia Triunfi, and of Girolamo Bibaldi, and also of Alessandro del Borro; but at length the imperative commands of Philip called him back to Madrid, and he left Italy, never to re-visit the country he loved so well, and in which he had attained so great a triumph. He returned by

way of Parma, Modena, and Genoa, purchasing pictures at each place, and arriving again in Barcelona in June 1651.

In the following year the artist was appointed by the king to the high position of Palace Marshal. It is said that he asked for the position, but there is no real evidence in support of the assertion. It is more likely that the king, who was ever heaping honour upon the artist, and who delighted in having him always with him, was desirous that he should accept this office, just become vacant by the death of Palombino, to which the king was anxious, to attach the position of surveyor of the royal picture galleries, which were now, thanks to the recent purchases, assuming a very important place among the treasures of the court. There were, however, far too many duties attached to this important post, and although the arrangement and custody of the galleries was work which Velazquez could undertake and carry out well, yet the more ceremonial duties of the position, the organisation of court festivities, and the arrangement of plans as to the progress of the court from one part of the kingdom to another, were beyond his strength, and his acceptance of this position was the beginning of the end.

All the additional work, however, did not prevent the artist from producing pictures that were even greater in their way than anything he had yet painted. In fact, his fame very largely rests, especially in the minds of those who have

only seen some of his works, upon the paintings executed during the last few years of his life. Then it was that he painted his fine picture called *Las Meniñas*, or *The Maids of Honour*, and the perhaps even yet more wonderful *Las Hilanderas*, or *The Spinners*, both of which are treasures of the Prado gallery; while in portraiture his energy seemed inexhaustible. *Philip IV.*, one of the notable treasures of our National Gallery, belongs to this time, as also the portraits of the youthful *Queen Doña Mariana of Austria*, one of which belongs to Sir Cuthbert Quilter, and of her children, the *Infanta Margarita* and her two brothers *Prosper* and *Ferdinand*. He also produced several portraits of the king's other daughter, *Maria Teresa*, daughter of the Queen Isabella, who afterwards became the wife of her cousin Louis XIV. These were not all, however; as to this time we owe many of the portraits of the dwarfs who were such favourites at the court, and whose clever fooling and amusing jokes so delighted the youthful queen, when she first came into the dreary court of Spain. *The Crucifixion* was also painted at this time, and the remarkable *Venus*, which belongs to Mr Morritt of Rokeby Hall and which, it is clear, was produced in emulation of Titian, and with the most subtle of modelling and broad sweeping action. It was very possibly intended for the Mirror Room at the Alcazar, in which were, it is said, a series of grand mythological paintings. Near the end of his career he

painted the *Coronation of the Virgin*, for the queen's private chapel; and then, perhaps, last of all, the portraits of the *Infanta Margarita*, which are in the Louvre and in Spain.

Then came the marriage of the princess with Louis XIV., which was to be conducted in a scene of unheard of splendour and amidst a magnificent pageant. The painter in his new position had all the work of arranging for this marriage; for the handing over of the youthful princess, and for the erection and decoration of the temporary palace which was fitted up for the purpose on the Isle of Pheasants.

When it was all over he fell ill. He is said to have contracted an ague on the frontier of the kingdom, and to have been overstrained and over-fatigued by all the duties of his position. The king was deeply distressed, and placed his own physicians at his disposal, and sent his own confessor and several prelates of high degree to the suffering artist. Everything that could be thought of was done; but Velazquez was dying; and on Friday, August 6, 1660, he received the last sacraments, signed his will, thanked the king for all he had done for him, and peacefully passed away.

His body was clothed in the habit of the knightly order to which he belonged, that of the Knights of Santiago, one of the greatest orders in Europe. It was laid in state for a while, and then three days afterwards the remains of the artist were buried in the church of St. John the Baptist. His wife survived him only a few days.

THE ART OF VELAZQUEZ

IT is not easy at first for the ordinary observer to appreciate the charm of Velazquez. There are many reasons why this should be so. The work of the Spanish school of painting differs in almost every way from the work of the Italian or English school; and to those who are accustomed to base their ideas as to what constitutes a fine picture on their knowledge of the masterpieces of these schools, the Spanish pictures appear dull, pretentious and formal.

PORTRAITURE.

There is often an inadequate knowledge on the part of the observer of the true dignity and importance of a portrait, and a sort of notion that unless the person who is depicted is known to the observer, and is painted in such a way as to attract attention at once as a good superficial likeness, the picture which is merely a portrait is wanting in general interest, and little deserves attention.

A few moments consideration of this heresy will convince one of its error. Memory will at once recall the fact that the great masters whose works the world has ever admired, and whose

noblest creations have been the masterpieces of art, have been in almost every case portrait painters; and that the chief treasures of the world in art are the portraits painted by such men as Raphael, Reynolds, Rembrandt, Gainsborough, Titian, Romney, Giorgione, Memlinc, Holbein, Hogarth, and Lawrence.

Furthermore, is not the human face not only the most difficult, but also the most entrancing subject for the skill of an artist? Is it not the first desire of a youthful artist, and the result of his most finished production at the close of his life? Is it not the object of his greatest attention, his deepest study, his most earnest endeavour; and does it not by its very complexity, its change, in a word, its life, elude him many times, and demand the careful attention of his whole life? Is not the human face the dearest thing we have in life; the sweetest, the most wonderful, and that which we study at all times with earnest endeavour if by any means we can discover the secret of the mind, in its moods and changes? Small wonder, therefore, if to the artist it is the highest of all studies.

Is not our appreciation of the facts of history much helped by the study of the portraits that we still possess of the chief heroes of the story? Surely, as we look into a face or into a portrait to try to glean some knowledge of the sort of person to whom it belongs, so we gaze at the portraits of those who have helped to make history, and from their features build up our

theories as to the reasons for their actions, and for the results that sprang therefrom.

If a portrait is well painted it should be an index to the character of the person who is depicted; not the mere fixing or crystalisation of a transient glance or a momentary expression. It should have been painted after serious study of the habits and life of the person, and should be a true reflection and expression of that life.

The very word likeness is often misunderstood, as a portrait may be an excellent likeness without appealing with force to the casual observer. Many a person, perhaps one should say every person, needs to be known to be understood, and to dwell with a person for a long time, to study the face under varying moods is needful, in order to understand what is its real appearance, and at what time it is most true to itself. For such reasons it is evident that it is not the casual observer who is able to determine with the greatest accuracy whether a portrait is a likeness or not of the person who is represented.

The works of Velazquez are mainly portraits, and they are also very largely the portraits of one family, and largely of one person. They were painted under the influence of the most formal court in Europe, a court in which etiquette ruled supreme, and in which the laws that regulated conduct were as hard as iron and as tenacious as steel. The portraits that Velazquez painted of persons outside the royal family of Spain were done by the instructions of the king, and intended

as gifts or as marks of special favour; but the painter was not in a position to accept commissions in the ordinary way.

It must also be remembered, in considering the works of this great artist, that he worked under wholly different circumstances from those which regulate the life of an artist of the present day or those of the immediate past. There were no exhibitions at which he was expected to exhibit; there were no public galleries at which he would receive the attention of the public; there were no art critics, nor any journals to praise or to condemn, or even to compare his work with that of his predecessors. There was no hurry or rush of speed, no necessity for completion by a given moment, for the despatch of the picture by train or by ship. All was leisure, and, therefore, the problems of light and form could receive their due consideration.

Even more than that must be taken into consideration the facts that he was the court painter, and bound by the regulations not only of the court but of an imperious and jealous master, and that he was also bound by the laws of his religion, which took upon themselves to bind the pursuit of art within closely defined instructions, going so far as to insist upon certain colours for certain objects, and a definite arrangement of composition and subject.

All this environment must be understood 'ere the art of Velazquez will reveal any of its mysteries to the ordinary observer; but such knowledge is

not the only necessity in the study of his art. As the sensitive instrument, used by Marconi in his marvellous wireless transmission of messages, needs to be in perfect accord on all points with the transmitter that is in the hands of the sender of the message: so the mind of the student of the works of Velazquez needs to be in musical accord, not only with the spirit of the times, but also with the intention of the artist, if a proper grasp of the character of the picture is to be obtained.

The apparently dull and unemotional portraits of Velazquez have hidden below their surface lessons deep and important for those who will strive to find them out, and who, by placing themselves in tune with the artist, will realise the emotion that he strove to produce.

TRUTH AND SIMPLICITY.

The great leading characteristic about these portraits is their earnest truth. The Spanish artist painted persons and things as he saw them, with a realism that is surprising. The men stand out as if alive, and if only one picture at a time is considered, and the others are shut out from view, it will be like looking at a living person, who stands breathing and speaking before the observer.

The difficult problems of light were solved in masterly fashion, and the light is shed around, or focussed, as the case may be, in a purely scientific and accurate manner.

Velazquez in his art never forgot that painting differs from music, to which it is otherwise so closely allied, by reason of the fact that, in music the effect upon the observer is gradual and by sequence of sound, while in painting the effect is instant, complete, and with all its forces used in simultaneous effect. There is, therefore, in his works an intimate connection in all parts of the picture. No lack of unity, no undue importance of accessory; nothing to draw away the mind from the reception of the picture first as a whole; all the parts united in harmonious co-relation with each other.

Simplicity is the leading characteristic; simplicity coupled with sincerity, without which there can be no true simplicity. His art is never artifice; there are no tricks of mannerism, no ignoble methods, no paltry triflings; all is noble, dignified and restrained.

In actual technique, Velazquez, as Stevenson pointed out, does not deal so much in lines as in masses. His pictures would not engrave well. They are not built up in swirling lines, in grand contours and in voluptuous curves. They are, on the other hand, erected in masses of colour, combined with the utmost subtlety; sober in result, but full of tone value, and abounding in effects of marvellous light, that are only to be noticed by the close observer.

His blacks, sombre as they are, are full of the glow of greenish lights, that play amid the folds of the draperies, like a myriad of elves (see the

portrait of *Pulido Pareja*, in the National Gallery); and when once the observer has placed himself in the right position before one of the master's portraits, in the place in which the master himself intended him to stand, and where the effect of light is obtained that he has represented, then the whole canvas is seen to be aglow with life and colour, which at first seemed to be dense and uninteresting, with an absence of life or light.

Velazquez is not to be dismissed with a casual glance. He needs to be studied. His portraits were not the result of sudden inspiration so much as of deep study, and his desires were manifold.

Decorative his pictures always were; full of the feeling for decoration, and planned for the position that they were to occupy, and, therefore, never at their best in new surroundings, or close up to one another in a crowded gallery. Dignified they also were; full of the grave dignity of the Spanish Court, and even when full of movement, as in the portrait of *Don Baltazar Carlos*, who rushes past in childish glee on his prancing horse, the artist was never forgetful of the princely dignity of the youthful personage who was the hero of the picture.

DELINEATION OF CHARACTER.

Dignity and decorative value, however, were not the chief characteristics of these portraits. Their greatest claim to consideration consists in

their power of delineating character. Velazquez was a painter of the mind. His great aim was to present with absolute truth, great sobriety, pure simplicity, by the aid of the magic of his mastery of tone, a delineation of the character of the person whose portrait he was painting at the time (see the portrait of *Innocent X.* at Apsley House); and this he has done with magnificent result. He was a master of technique; his modelling is of the finest possible description, broad and full where it was so needed, rippling and dainty where the treatment was so required; but technique was his servant and never his master; decorative effect always his intention, dignity always his purpose, but the painting of the mind his real aim.

Over and over again, he painted the calm, impressive face of the king, who was alike his master and his friend, and who in the studio of Velazquez was able and willing to unbend from the stiff yoke of galling etiquette that bound him. Every line of it he knew, every mood of its owner was familiar to him, every change as advancing years came on he watched, and under the gliding action of his brush that face revealed itself in all its complexity; so that now we can understand the very thoughts of Philip IV., as we gaze at his portraits painted by his noble servant and devoted subject.

IMPRESSIONISM.

There are yet other leading characteristics of

Velazquez that demand attention in the pages of this little book. He was an impressionist in the truest meaning of the word. He could seize upon an effect in its momentary force, and represent it in all its bare truth. His *Meniñas* (or *Maids of Honour*) and his *Hilanderas* (or *Spinners*) are cases in point. Here are interior scenes represented with absolute truth, in which the light and the composition, the figures and the actions, are faithfully painted with a Pre-Raphaelite realism, and yet with an impressionism that is of the highest kind.

CHIARO-OSCURO.

One of his very greatest characteristics arises out of his absolute truth, and that is his power of painting colour as it really is, by which means he avoided the pitfalls into which many of those who have followed him have fallen.

It is quite evident, as Stevenson first pointed out, that Velazquez never tried to paint a colour in his picture with the tone it would have possessed under other circumstances.

He would not shield out the effect of light in order to ascertain, as has been said, "what the true colour of the object is." He would never value his colours against dense or sunny objects in another light. Every colour was painted as it appeared in the light in which he saw it, even if that colour had taken upon itself another effect of tint, and the consequence of this truthful method of work is that the picture has a unity of

impression, and the colours have reciprocal independence in the actual colour relations of nature. For example, the silver looked blueish in the light on the costume of *Philip IV.*, in the National Gallery, and is therefore painted with bright blue colour. Water in shadow looks limpid, and is so represented in *The Water-Carrier*, at Apsley House; and, in some landscapes, the sun made the green grass look yellow, and yellow it is painted with unswerving accuracy.

He is a master of atmosphere. He has a command of values that is unequalled in any other man. There is never any false lighting or inaccurate incidence of light; and, for the same reason, he not only understood, but grasped the importance of mystery, in shadows.

The picture already mentioned, which is called *Las Meniñas*, is a good example of what is meant in this connection. There is a large gloomy room, and the foreground is occupied with the figures of the Infanta and her attendants. In the middle distance looms out the figure of the artist; at the back in a mirror is seen the reflection of the faces of the king and queen; while beyond even these a courtier is to be seen drawing back a curtain. The foreground illumination is full of brilliant light, concentrated upon the figures; and then the eye is led back step by step, with wonderful atmosphere, till it rests upon the very distant figure of the courtier. There is atmosphere everywhere. Dim spaces of air and light are just revealed, while above

Laurent photo.] [*Prado Gallery, Madrid.*

LAS MENIÑAS
(The Maids of Honour).

the room is full of darkness, flecked and illumined with rays of mystic light, forming a part of the whole composition; framing it in: giving just the needed dark effect above the brilliant, lighted foreground, that was wanted to pull the whole work into proper relationship, and to give to every portion its true value.

PERSONAL TREATMENT.

Above all, in considering the art of Velazquez, is it needful to realise how personal he is. Never does he become merely mechanical. Never is it possible to apply to him the laws and regulations of scientific Morellian criticism. He always painted what he saw in the way in which he saw it, true in every way, with the very light of heaven upon it, as he saw it at that moment; and hence he defies the hard and fast lines that in the Italian masters regulate the shape of the ear or the knuckles of the hand.

With all his love of realism, he was yet a master of the art of "treating" an object, and fully grasped the fact that some things are necessary and others are merely accessory.

The marvellous power belonged to the great Spaniard of being able to select with unerring judgment what was really necessary, and discarding what were merely accessories; of painting with all the definition that which was of primary importance, and then "treating" the rest; but doing it with an absolute truth to what even in

"treating" was of paramount value; and, therefore, no works are so near to the effect of nature as are his, and none produce the true effect of the perspective of the atmosphere as do his.

In regarding him, let the knowledge of his environment be well borne in mind; the understanding of his desire, that the picture as a whole in its effect upon the sight in the right position, should be true, that each colour should have its right value against the others, and in the light in which they stand, that dignity and sobriety should be keys to the scheme of treatment; and, above all, that the painter was working to depict the mind and character of his sitter, and painting him exactly as he saw him, with stern determination to represent him as he was.

OUR ILLUSTRATIONS.

WE have selected for the illustrations to this book some of the chief works of the artist that are out of England, in order that the reader who has studied the pictures in the National Gallery and other places, according to the list given on page 51, may be able by means of the pictures that are here to carry his knowledge yet a step further.

In the case of Velazquez it is also important to notice, that circumstances compel us to go beyond the British Isles if we wish to illustrate his greatest works; as the chief of them have never left the country for which they were first painted, and in no other gallery but that of the Prado, in Madrid, is it possible to obtain such a survey of the work of the artist as to be able adequately to understand and appreciate him.

His three great subject pictures, termed affectionately in Spain, *Las Lanzas*, *Las Meniñas* and *Las Hilanderas*, which we may here style as *The Surrender of Breda*, *The Maids of Honour*, and *The Spinners*, rank among the world's masterpieces, and, save for the existence of a fine sketch for *Las Meniñas*, which belongs to Mr Ralph Bankes, and has been lent to the Royal Academy, they have never been seen in this country. Of the *King Philip*

IV. we have fine representations in England, and also of his son, the short lived *Infante Don Baltazar Carlos.* We have also a masterly portrait of the *Pope Innocent X.*; but for the greatest of all the portraits of the king and his son we must still go to Spain; and the finished portrait of the Pope, for which the Duke of Wellington possesses so magnificent a sketch, has never left the palace in Rome, for which it was originally intended.

It is mainly to the fact of the Peninsular War, and to the gift made to its noble general, that we owe the existence in this country of any of the great works of Velazquez. But for it, perhaps, the portrait given to Charles I., together with a few works that have been sold from time to time, might have been all that we should have possessed to represent the artist. Other countries are in much the same position. All the chief pictures were painted for the king, and his family, and his court, and have never been allowed to leave Spain, where they have been jealously guarded; and, save for the gifts that Philip made to other monarchs, and for the spoils of war, and of very occasional commerce, Spain has retained all the pictures painted by her renowned son.

The two portraits that we give of the Don Ferdinand and Don Carlos in hunting costume, are probably the earliest of our illustrations, and may be given to the period between 1632 and 1636. They were two out of a set of three pictures which the king commissioned for a small

Laurent photo.] [*Prado Gallery, Madrid.*

DON FERDINAND OF AUSTRIA IN HUNTING COSTUME.

hunting seat that stood in the deer park of El Pardo, a little village about six miles from Madrid. In this park the Emperor Charles V. had erected a tower, called Torre de la Parada, and this tower Philip had enclosed with a two storied structure, to which he often retreated after the delights of the chase. It was in this park that the important state hunting parties took place; and Philip loved to entertain his friends at this lovely tower, and to gather around him the chief personages of his court. He desired that Velazquez should paint various pictures for his apartments in this tower, and amongst them three, which should depict himself, his son and his brother in hunting costume. The portrait of the *Cardinal Prince Ferdinand* must have been the first done; the other two were executed after he had left Spain for Flanders.

Perhaps the success of the king's brother, who was on the point of going away to take up his duties as regent of the Netherlands, gave the idea for the other two portraits; but, in any case, it is quite clear from a careful examination of them, that the artist was not quite satisfied with them as they were at first painted, but afterwards repainted portions of them, and so produced the existing delightful result.

The *Portrait of Don Carlos*, at that time only six years old, is the finest of the three. The setting of each picture is absolutely true to life. The sober coloured scenery of the dry sierra, the

oak tree, and, above all, the effect of the light through the leaves and glinting on to the figures, is the absolute perfection of truth.

In the *Portrait of Don Carlos*, the boy stands with a simple dignity. He is but a lad, but quite conscious of the importance of his birthright, and of the honour that was paid to him when only six years of age; and withal there is a twinkle of fun in those soft brown eyes, of amusement which had been restrained, and was still held well in hand for fear that it might detract from the dignity befitting the son of the king of Spain.

The boy, to those who have carefully studied the works of Velazquez, seems a living person, for the artist has presented him with absolute fidelity. We see him here in hunting costume; in the Duke of Abercorn's picture, in the stiff gold embroidery of state; in the king's picture, in gleaming armour, an imperial lad; and, in other pictures, we see him in more homely attire; but always there is the same stern resolve to show himself worthy of his position, child though he is, and always also the same merry twinkle, as though he was really amused at all the fuss that was being made of him.

His beloved dogs appear in several pictures. In this one there are two, the setter and an Italian greyhound; and in other works there are three, as two greyhounds are to be seen. In the king's portrait there is but one, a fine mastiff, and in the third work, that of the Prince Ferdinand,

Laurent photo.] [*Prado Gallery, Madrid.*

DON BALTAZAR CARLOS, AGED SIX,
IN HUNTING COSTUME.

there is to be found a superb Andalusian hunting dog. All are beautifully painted; full of that character which Velazquez could delineate in his portraits, whether of men or of dogs; and they also illustrate another curious quality of the artist, his power to paint loose covering material.

Notice in the dogs how admirably their skin is painted, and how, especially in the picture of the setter stretched out asleep, the loose detached effect of the skin is represented. Take the gloves worn by the little prince as a further example of the same power, or those which the king has on his hands, and the same effect of looseness is to be seen, so that one can almost realise the hand underneath and know how very slightly the glove fitted, and tell where the fingers were to be found inside the glove that was so much larger than they were.

The effect of weight is another feature that comes out in these portraits. The student can quite appreciate the great weight of the fowling-piece held by the king from the very posture in which it is held, and the effect of it upon the muscles of the arm. The boy's gun is on the ground; but again the weight of the steel barrel is to be realised by the manner in which he is supporting it in his hand.

The other picture which we give of the prince represents him on horseback, and is one of the best known portraits of Don Baltazar Carlos (*see frontis.*). Here, again, is that same delightful combination of dignity with childish excitement and fun.

The king and his minister Olivarez were well known as two of the finest horsemen in Europe, and from three years old the young prince was set upon a horse, and taught by the cleverest teachers to be a good rider. We are told that he took up the pursuit with delight, and quickly became proficient in it, sitting his pony with the most perfect ease and delighting in the excitement of a fast gallop.

It was the king's greatest pleasure to see his son riding, and to mark the skill with which he guided his steed; and to the boy himself the pleasure of riding afforded the keenest joy, as he was then rid to a certain extent of the galling yoke of etiquette, which bound him at so tender an age, and was able to be out in the air that he loved, and in company with his favourite dogs and pony.

This being understood it is easy to realise the look of delight as the boy gallops past the spectator on his high-bred Andalusian pony, the animal taking as much pleasure as the rider in the rapid motion. There is all the pride of the youthful rider, all the desire to be praised and approved, all the exhilaration of the exercise.

The effect of motion is presented in a masterly way, and the boy appears as though he would gallop out of the canvas. The air has caught his scarf, and sends it flying in the breeze; the mane and tail of the pony flutter out around the rider; and he himself sits his horse with a perfect ease, the result of his early training, and bears

aloft the baton which he carries as though leading his forces into battle.

The wonderful foreshortening of the pony should be noticed, and the way in which, by means of the thin haze in the distance and fresh clearness of the foreground, the effect of early morning is shown. The distance sweeps back into almost illimitable space, bounded only by the blue mountains; while the shimmering light on the hide of the pony, the gleam of the gold embroidery of the child's scarf, and the flutter of all the accessories in the breeze, combine to give the perfect representation that the artist desired, and, as Justi says, the spectator seems almost to hear the clattering of the hoofs as the pony rushes past and breaks the stillness of that fair spring morning.

Here are life, motion, air, speed, all represented in the grandest manner, and at the same time the decorative value is never forgotten. The artist has, by his colour scheme—the dark green velvet jacket, black hat, white sleeves, red and gold scarf and brown boots against the gleaming chestnut of the pony — produced a striking effect, which he has set against the deep brown, sandy earth, and lighted with the gold, silver and white of the clouds.

From the midst of all shines out the face of the lad, painted with the lightest of touches, the thinnest of paint, but finished with the utmost refinement, luminous, clear and bright.

These illustrations do not, however, do full

justice to the art of Velazquez in portraiture, as they were all painted in the middle of his career, before he had acquired the most perfect expression of his ability; and we must look to the portraits of his later times for the most complete examples of his consummate power.

The head of *Philip IV.*, and the portrait of the *Pope Innocent X.*, may be taken to represent the fullest developement of the artist.

To properly appreciate the head of the king one has to go right up to it, stand face to face with it, look into it, and commune with the picture. Then only can its extraordinary force be realised.

The king had passed through many troubles: he had lost a great part of his kingdom, and many misfortunes had overtaken him. The extreme pride of his nature had suffered a severe blow; his indolent carelessness and indifference to the cares of his kingdom had brought their natural reward. But now, at the close of his career, the goodness and kindness of his nature had been allowed to have fuller play, and he had risen to a sense of his responsibilities, with the ability that he had always possessed.

The features of the sad, but dignified, face are strongly marked, and are furrowed by trouble and marked by pain; but there is an earnestness, a determination and a gravity that tell the very character of the man. Mark the modelling on the face; note the manner in which it is built up

Laurent photo.] [*Prado Gallery, Madrid.*

PHILIP IV.

with solid masses of colour: not in swirling lines or in delicate *nuances* of accent, but firm, strong, powerful painting, put on with a hand as resolute as that of the king himself, with a full knowledge of the effect that each mark of the brush would produce.

The face is that of an elderly man, who will not give in to the ravages of time until he is forced to do so. His hair still hangs long and fair about his neck, his skin is still clear, firm and white, almost unearthly in its pallor. There is the look of a king, and the carriage of a sovereign, in that finely-balanced, well-poised head, and there is a gleam of tenderness in those eyes, such as there used not to be in earlier years.

The background is plain and simple; the closely fitting, dark dress is sombre, and yet full of flecks of marvellous light; the white *golilla* is as clear in its brilliance as the face itself, and yet foils it by its smooth, cold surface.

All is concentrated on the face, which comes out of the mysterious gloom with surpassing dignity, and which will reveal, to the person who studies it, a variety of complex emotions that will well repay diligent attention.

The *Innocent X.* (*see* p. 18) is a more imposing work. The Pope is seated in the chair of state, wearing a white lace-trimmed surplice, a cape and a cap, and the whole effect is that of glowing red. The chair, the cape, the cap, are all of the same grand colour, and even the countenance of the Pontiff

is full coloured, ruddy and bright; but the harmony is perfect with all these brave tones of red to bring into juxtaposition. The white collar is the accent of colour that relieves this study in red.

Clear set, however, in the midst of the living glow of hot colour, are the bright eyes of the Pontiff, full of life and light. They are painted most dexterously, deep down within the hollows of the face, and they gleam out with all the fire of activity and excitement. The wary, cautions, clever, but apprehensive, eyes are the focal points of the picture, and all else seems to be but the setting for these features.

The modelling is superb. The face looks at the spectator as though it would understand his very thoughts, and at the same time retain within itself any illumination of its own personal schemes. Never was a character laid bare in so masterly a manner as Velazquez was able to reveal the life history of this great Pontiff. The secrecy, the reticence of the man's nature: the desire to know everything that those about him thought, and to understand their motives, and the craft with which, while concealing his own aims, he obtained the knowledge of the purposes of others, are all shown in this face.

The sceptical diplomatist, the unwearying worker, the deep thinker, the obstinate opinionist, and the wary, alert, crafty ruler, are all united in the person of this man, and combined with a tremendous consciousness of the high importance

of his office, and the deep significance of the power that he held in spiritual matters within his grasp.

The generally accepted ugliness of the Pontiff's features became transfigured in the portrait. But the absolute truth with which the artist painted the portrait, having with rare insight penetrated below the surface, and seen the character which Innocent had always believed was so completely hidden, make it probably the most startling delineation of character that Europe had ever seen.

The white of the surplice, dazzling in its brilliance, serves but to show up the brown shrivelled fingers which are near to it, and which stand out in striking manner; while the apparent rapidity of the whole work, the momentariliness of the expression, is likened to the illumination of a flash of lightning that reveals in an instant the inner life of a man.

The three subject pictures that we have selected constitute the greatest group of subject pictures that was ever painted.

The *Surrender of Breda* belongs to the middle period of the artist's life; the other two to its close.

Las Lanzas (*see* p. 12) was painted for the Sala de los Reinos in the palace of Buen Retiro, to depict the greatest event in the warfare of Spain.

Breda was one of the strongest of the fortresses of Europe. Its defence was conducted with all

the bravery and skill that the forces of the Netherlands could use. Its attack was made by the flower of Spanish chivalry, and with the keenest of finesse, and vigilance; and the scene before its walls was watched by all Europe with interest.

When the surrender took place, Spinola granted to the brave defenders such terms as the world had never seen; and the conquered force, with Justin at their head, marched out with all the panoply of glory, as though they had been the conquerors, while those who remained in the city were granted a general amnesty.

Spain in this was worthy of her character as the most chivalrous of nations; and the artist has done ample justice to his great theme. The meeting of Spinola and Justin is a model of exquisite courtesy, and the gracious manner of the conqueror is intended to render the ordeal of the delivery up of the keys as little severe as would be possible.

As a picture the composition is beyond praise. The grand lines of the lances, which give the picture its favourite name, and the symmetry of which so splendidly typified the discipline of the army, form a fitting relief to the more scattered group on the other side. The foreshortened horse in the foreground is a fine figure, and gives value and a sense of size to the picture, while beyond, in the distance, the painter has skilfully contrived, without crowding his canvas, to give the impression of a great garrison and troops of soldiers in both armies. The contrast,

also, that he has so cleverly made between the rival commanders and their attendants is as admirable as can be conceived.

In the two later subject pieces he was even able to excel this work, as *Las Meniñas* is without doubt the best interior that was ever painted, if its absolute truth and accurate lighting be borne in mind (*see* p. 32).

The spectator takes the place of the king, who was no doubt sitting to Velazquez at the moment, and having his queen close to him. They can both be seen reflected in the mirror at the end of the room. The princess was sent for, it is said, that the sight of her and the sound of her voice might relieve the monotony of the sitting.

On her arrival, the light, which had been concentrated upon the royal sitters in the dusky Spanish room, was allowed to fall upon the youthful princess and her attendants, and the sunlight, that had been kept out of the room to insure its coolness, now lit up the foreground, and some of its rays even penetrated the darker corners of the chamber. Velazquez, not being satisfied with this new effect of light, desired to see what a front light would do for the scene, and Don Nieto, the queen's quartermaster, opened a door to the rear of the artist. The picture is taken at that moment. The idea must have been a sudden inspiration on the part of the king or of the artist, and is instantaneous in its effect.

In the forground is the princess ; kneeling by

her, and handing her some water in a red cup on a gold salver, is her lady, Doña Maria Agostina; while curtseying slightly, on the opposite side is another lady in attendance, Doña Isabel de Velasco. These are the Meniñas. In the very front are the two grotesque dwarfs, Barbola and Pertusato, one of whom is awakening the big dog who was slumbering peacefully in the heat. Further back, quietly talking, are two more court officials; one in a convent habit, Doña Marcela de Ulloa, and the *guarda damas* ("ladies' guard"); while quite in the rear, Nieto opens the door. The artist himself stands at his great easel, and the king and queen are only to be seen in the mirror, opposite to which they had placed themselves.

As Justi wisely states, it is the picture of a picture, and yet it is one of those works in which we entirely forget that we are looking at a picture, and appear to look right back into the room.

The lighting is the wonderful feature about this work. All the figures are lighted with the most absolute truth, toned according to their respective positions, ranging from the full light upon the princesses to the depth of shadow on those who are in the rear.

The dazzling effect of the full sunlight is seen in all its force, and the depth of shadow out of which the figures appear to grow is as admirably presented.

The upper part of the room is left in deep shade, so as to frame in the scene and give right contrast to the figures and proportionate

height, while the dimness that spreads itself over the whole is the true result of the dazzling light in juxtaposition with all the gloom that its very brilliance reveals to the eye. The spectator sees the scene which the king saw, and not that which the artist could have seen, and he looks right down into the room, as though it was an actual one, and he was gazing into it.

On the breast of the artist is the red cross of Santiago, one of the highest orders of chivalry in Europe, which the king conferred upon the artist, painting in, it is said, with his own hand, the red cross on the figure of the artist, in appreciation of the masterpiece that he had produced.

The original sketch for this picture is in England, and is almost equal in merit to the finished work; although it lacks the figures that are seen in the mirror of the completed picture.

In *The Spinners* there is another fine effect of light, but this time it is the contrasting one to the other picture. There are two rooms here; the further one, a sort of showroom, where some fair ladies are inspecting the tapestry, is lit up with an effulgence of brilliant sunlight. The rays shed a veritable blaze of light upon the glowing tapestry and upon the gaily attired ladies, and the whole room is full of light.

In the foreground, however, is another room, from which, to keep the air cool, most of the

light has been shielded off; and the figures are more or less in gloom, the back part of the picture in this case being the well lighted portion.

In the foreground room the workers are engaged, and the one on whom most of the light falls is the young girl who is spinning, and whose figure is beautifully indicated in the position that she occupies, where she is lit up by the rays of sunlight. It is only her back that is to be seen, with her arms and a foot, her face being turned away from the spectator.

Another girl entering the room, and the old woman who is at the wheel, are illumined by a reflected light; while the girl in the centre, who is kneeling, is in shadow, although her face can be seen by the effect of the light in the further room, setting it out as in a glowing frame.

The picture is very remarkable from the fact that no persons in it seem to have any idea of what the artist is doing with them. It is a sudden inspiration, as was the other; but in this case we have the artist's point of view represented, and a triumphant mastery of a combination of puzzling lights, as no artist before had attempted to represent.

There is animation in the picture, lively motion; and, as Justi points out, there is almost the effect of sound: the spinning wheel, the chatter of the people, the operation of carding, the purring of the cat, and the remarks of the spinners as they talk with one another at their work.

Laurent photo.] [*Prado Gallery, Madrid.*

LAS HILANDERAS

LIST OF THE ARTIST'S CHIEF WORKS.

SPAIN

The majority of the works of Velazquez are, as already stated, in Spain. In the Prado Gallery, Madrid, there are at least forty-six genuine, undoubted pictures, besides several others which are attributed to the artist, and many more in which he painted a part of the picture only. There are also representative pictures in the Royal Palace of Madrid, in the Escorial, in many of the palaces in the city, and also in Seville, Granada, Valladolid, and Valencia; so that a visit to that country is indispensable to a right understanding of the genius of the artist.

AUSTRIA.

There are several notable works in Austria, in the picture gallery of Vienna; specially portraits of the Infanta Margarita Teresa at different periods of her life, and of Philip IV., his first wife, and both his sons, Don Baltazar Carlos and Don Felipe Prosper.

FRANCE.

In the Louvre the chief works are the important portrait of the Infanta Margarita Maria, with her name in large letters upon it, the group of thirteen persons engaged in conversation, two portraits of the King Philip IV., a charming portrait of the Infanta Maria Teresa when about twelve years of age, and a portrait of the Dean of the Chapel in Toledo.

GERMANY.

There are works at Berlin, Dresden, Frankfort and Munich. One of the Dresden pictures is a fine portrait of Olivarez, in black costume, wearing the green cross of the Order of Alcantara. A picture of the Infanta Margarita Maria, as a child, in white and red, which is at Munich, must not be overlooked.

HOLLAND.

There are two portraits in Holland—at Amsterdam and at the Hague

ITALY.

In Italy there is the masterpiece, named already on page 43, of the Pope Innocent X., which is at the Doria Palace. There are also works at the Pitti Palace, at the Uffizi, and in the Brera Gallery in Milan; and there are two fine heads in the Gallery in Turin.

RUSSIA.

At the Hermitage Gallery in St Petersburg are some very fine and notable examples of the painter's work, specially the other sketch for the portrait of Innocent X., two pictures of Olivarez, and a very fine one of Philip IV.

SWEDEN.

There is one picture in the Royal Palace at Grypsholm, given to the Queen of Sweden by a Spanish Amabassador to her Court.

BRITISH ISLES.

The pictures which are in the British Isles, and are accessible, are noted at greater length.

NATIONAL GALLERY, LONDON.

PHILIP IV. OF SPAIN HUNTING THE WILD BOAR. (197.)

This is probably the painting done for the Torre de la Parada, to which Velazquez alludes in a letter dated October 16, 1636. The king, attended by Olivarez, has just struck his *horquilla*, or fork, into the flanks of a boar tearing furiously by. The Queen can be seen in a coach watching the sport. The picture is painted so as to represent a very great space, and the figures are touched in with but few strokes, but are full of life, and gay in rich costume. There are over a hundred figures in the picture, each of which can be studied, notwithstanding the slightness of their execution.

A DEAD WARRIOR. (741.)

A fine piece of solemn effect.

PHILIP IV. OF SPAIN. (745.)

It is well to go right up to this portrait and look into its face. It represents the king toward the close of his life, and is a superb piece of character painting. Mark how exquisitely the modelling is done, and what life and expression there are in the face.

PHILIP IV. OF SPAIN. (1129.)

This is a full length portrait. Notice, at a distance, the wonderful way in which the brown costume is painted, with its embroidery of silver, and the blueish effect of the light upon it. Mark, also, the greenish look of the black cloak, notably in the lining—the result of the light—and see how admirably the light glancing on the hair is represented. The sheen of the braid on the arm is almost like silver, and the effect is all produced in the most simple manner, thick lumps of paint being used with masterly skill Notice the clever manner in which

the loose effect of the gloves is painted, and the rich melodious charm of the whole costume, set against a plain, dull background, and then see how the face lights up, and what expression has been given to every feature of it.

Christ at the Pillar. (1148.)

A fine piece of painting; very sad, very touching in its pathos. The anguish on the features of the Saviour is effectively presented.

Portrait of the Admiral Pulido Pareja. (1315.)

Here is a sharply outlined figure, built up in masses and not in lines, set against a dense background, and painted with that marked skill as regards the effect of light that distinguished the artist. The black is flecked with green, and full of the broken rays of the light. The silver in the coat sleeve is gleaming with reflections of the light, and the white of the collar is of dazzling clearness. There is great dignity in the features; and, if all other pictures are shut off by the hand, as should be done with each of these great portraits, and the reflection of the glass avoided, the portrait will be found instinct with life and actuality. It should be remembered that none of these portraits were ever intended to have glass over them, and that which must now be put for protection is a serious difficulty in the way of a proper appreciation of the painter's aim and result.

Christ in the House of Martha. (1375.)

Notice the face of the old woman, the redness of the hands, the splendid painting of the various objects, and their absolute fidelity to truth. Mark also the fine effect of the light upon the inner room, and the dignity and pathos of the Christ.

SKETCH OF A DUEL IN THE PRADO. (1376.)

A BETROTHAL. (1434.)

A very broad sketch for a bigger picture. The figures below are grandly represented.

DULWICH GALLERY.

PHILIP IV. OF SPAIN. (249-[309].)

A clear, tender picture; a wonderful harmony of colour The picture should be studied quite closely, face to face.

WALLACE COLLECTION, LONDON.

DON BALTAZAR CARLOS IN THE RIDING SCHOOL. (6.)

An unquestionable original, and probably, like the similar one belonging to the Duke of Westminster, a study for a bigger picture that was never done. There are traces of alteration in both pictures, and changes in the design. The picture is brilliant in tone and colour, and the young prince advances across the canvas upon his wonderful foreshortened horse in most convincing manner. The great extent of the scene is well presented by the size and closeness of the horse. The figure of the man who holds out the lance to Olivarez is worthy of special notice. It is grand in its pose.

PORTRAIT OF A LADY WITH A FAN. (88.)

There are two representations of this lady, which differ widely one from the other. The one in the Duke of Devonshire's Gallery is the finer version of the two. The lady is evidently not of the Court circle, and was perhaps painted at the time when Velazquez was temporarily out of favour. It is a wonderfully intimate work, sober and harmonious.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, LONDON.

DON BALTAZAR CARLOS. Presented by Philip IV. to Charles I.

THE DUKE OF ABERCORN, BARONS COURT, IRELAND.

DON BALTAZAR CARLOS.

Painted about 1636. Similar to a picture in the Prado Gallery.

RALPH BANKES, ESQ., KINGSTON LACY, WIMBORNE.

The original sketch for *Las Meniñas*. The most important work by Velazquez in England.

THE MARQUESS OF BRISTOL, ICWORTH PARK, BURY ST. EDMUNDS.

DON BALTAZAR CARLOS.

THE EARL OF CARLISLE, CASTLE HOWARD, YORK.

PORTRAIT OF JUAN DE PAREJA.

This is the servant and colour grinder to Velazquez, whose portrait the artist painted when in Rome, and who himself afterwards revealed such skill as an artist that the king gave him his liberty and his master gave him lessons in the art. A most vigorous picture, full of force and expression. The face is hot, and hence was the more important as a study for the artist, before he painted the ruddy countenance of the Pope, than a paler face would have been. It was probably for that reason that it was selected by Velazquez. The features are built up by chunk of paints in most uncompromising

manner, and the speck of light in the eye, which gives light to the whole face, is marvellous in its value. The dull grey background, intentionally so simple, foils the ruddy countenance, and the picture should be examined closely, face to face, and then studied from a distance.

SIR FRANCIS COOK (The Executors of the Late), DOUGHTY HOUSE, RICHMOND.

The Omelet.

An Andalusian peasant's kitchen, smoke begrimed. The woman is in profile before the red pan on the fire in which the two eggs are spluttering; she has sunken eyes and brown complexion. The lad is of an African type. There are no studied effects of light, nothing that smacks of the studio, but, as Justi points out, all is down-right honesty. It is realistic, prosaic, if you will, but not trivial, and full of fine colour and deep, glorious effect of glow.

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE, DEVONSHIRE HOUSE, LONDON.

A Lady with a Black Mantilla.

This has been already named under the Wallace Gallery. Mark how the deep, soft brown eyes of the lady seem to burn right into the spectator, and to assert their own strength. Notice the depth of shadow on the hand, the redness on the eyelids, the roughness of the hands, as marks of the individualities of the sitter. The momentariliness of the conception is very notable: the sudden glance that has been caught, and the lightness of touch with which the picture is painted. It will not reveal its charms at the first sight, and requires to be studied and thought about, and then the wonderful value of this portrait will be realised.

MRS RICHARD FORD, LONDON.

THE COUNT-DUKE OLIVAREZ.

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VENUS AND CUPID.

Velazquez painted a series of mythological pictures for the Mirror Room at the Alcazar, but only three of them have survived, of which this is by far the most important. It has many characteristics in common with the work of Titian. The woman is, however, clearly a Spaniard, and attention in the picture is centred on the beautiful sweeping lines of the back and limbs. The face is just to be seen in the mirror, and the Cupid is buried in the impressive depth of the shadow. All the stress is laid upon the body, with its marvellous modelling and broad sweeping brush work. The reticence and purity of the picture should be carefully marked, and the exquisite surface and firmness of the flesh.

THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE, BOWOOD PARK, CALNE.

TWO LANDSCAPES.

From the Alcazar, Madrid.

THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK, STRATTON PARK, HANTS.

PHILIP IV. ON HORSEBACK.

This is said to be the finished sketch for the picture in the Prado. It was painted to commemorate the entry of the king into Lérida, and used to hang in the Palace of Buen Retiro.

SIR CUTHBERT QUILTER, BART., BAWDSEY MANOR, WOODBRIDGE.

DOÑA MARIANA OF AUSTRIA, SECOND WIFE OF PHILIP IV.

THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON, APSLEY HOUSE, LONDON.

INNOCENT X.

Go right up to this picture, and look into the Pope's eyes, in order to fully appreciate the power that the artist has given to the portrait. The very character of the wary Pontiff can be seen in those eyes. The picture is a marvellous harmony in red, and was probably the study from which the full length portrait was painted. The one in the Hermitage was in all probability another study, which the artist afterwards completed for some one else.

DON FRANCISCO DE QUIVEDO Y VILLEGAS.

The depth behind the glasses should be marked; the grand, rough modelling of the face, the treatment of the hair, and the force and strength of the portrait, and its actuality and realism.

THE WATER-CARRIER OF SEVILLE.

Done by Velazquez in his student days. The man who is represented was a Corsican, a well known figure in the streets of Seville. Justi tells us that the watering of the dusty ground of the Laguna, which was a favourite place of resort for the merry-makers in the evening, was entrusted to a guild of aguadores, or water-carriers, who were mostly Frenchmen or Corsicans, and who in return for their services were allowed the privilege of supplying the houses with excellent water, which they brought from a noted well, and carried in large stone jars. It is one of these water vendors who is represented in the picture. Near by is a lad taking the stem of the glass in which the refreshing fluid is contained, and between both can be seen a drinker, whose face is buried in an earthen mug

The figures are in the light, standing out from a dark background. There is no scenery; the handling is broad and sure, with very slight modelling, and the details of the painting are represented with the most absolute truth.

TWO YOUNG MEN AT A MEAL.

This is very minutely described by Palomino. It is a study, says he, of "foreshortened faces." One young man is in vanishing profile, drinking some chocolate from a bowl, the other seems to be dozing over the table, on which are various objects of good colour, represented in the grandest of tone, and very broadly treated.

THE DUKE OF WESTMINSTER, GROSVENOR HOUSE, LONDON.

A YOUNG MAN.

DON BALTAZAR CARLOS IN THE RIDING SCHOOL.

See remarks as to this picture under Wallace Gallery, page 55.

SUGGESTED CHRONOLOGY OF THE ARTIST'S MOST IMPORTANT WORKS.

From 1615 to 1623, being the period prior to the first visit to Italy.

The Water-Carrier. At Apsley House.

The Adoration of the Shepherds. In the National Gallery.

The Bust Portrait of Philip IV. In the Prado.

The Portrait of Olivarez. At Dorchester House.

The Full Length Portrait of Philip IV. In the Prado.

From 1628 to 1635 after the first visit to Italy.

Christ at the Pillar. In the National Gallery.

Portrait of Don Baltazar Carlos, with Another Child. Belonging till lately to the Earl of Carlisle; now at Berlin.

The Forge of Vulcan. In the Prado.

The Topers. In the Prado.

The Three Portraits of Philip IV., Don Ferdinand of Austria, and Don Baltazar Carlos, in Hunting Costume. In the Prado.

From 1635 to 1640.

The Four Great Equestrian Portraits: Olivarez, Philip IV., Don Baltazar Carlos, and Queen Isabella de Bourbon. In the Prado.

PORTRAIT OF DON BALTAZAR CARLOS. Belonging to the Marquess of Bristol.

PORTRAIT OF DON BALTAZAR CARLOS. In Buckingham Palace.

PORTRAIT OF ADMIRAL PULIDO DE PAREJA. In the National Gallery.

THE SURRENDER OF BREDA (LAS LANZAS). In the Prado.

ÆSOP AND MŒNIPPUS. In the Prado.

THE VARIOUS DWARFS. In the Prado.

From 1649 to the date of his death, that is after the second journey to Italy.

PORTRAIT OF INNOCENT X. In the Doria Palace, Rome.

LAS MENIÑAS. In the Prado.

LAS HILANDERAS. In the Prado.

PHILIP IV. (OLD). In the National Gallery.

PHILIP IV. (OLD). In the Prado.

JUAN DE PAREJA. Belonging to the Earl of Carlisle

DON BALTAZAR CARLOS IN THE RIDING SCHOOL Belonging to the Duke of Westminster.

CHRONOLOGY OF THE ARTIST'S LIFE.

1599. Birth of Velazquez.

1612. Velazquez placed with Francisco de Herrara to learn painting.

1614. Velazquez leaves Herrara, and passes into the studio of Francisco Pacheco.

1618. Velazquez marries the daughter of Pacheco, Juana de Miranda.

1623. Velazquez paints his first portrait of Philip IV., and is appointed Court Painter.

1628. Rubens comes to the Court of Spain.

1629. Velazquez goes with Spinola to Italy.

1631. Velazquez returns to Spain.

1643. The disgrace of Olivarez.

1644. Velazquez goes with Philip to the War; stopping at Fraga.

1646. Baltazar died.

1649. Velazquez goes again to Italy; by way of Genoa and Milan to Venice, then on to Rome and Naples.

1651. Velazquez returns to Spain, and is made Marshal of the Palace.

1659. Marriage of Maria Teresa to Louis XIV. of France.

1660. Death of Velazquez, on August 6th, at Madrid.

CHIEF BOOKS ON VELAZQUEZ

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BERUETE, A. DE. Velazquez. 1898.

CURTIS, C. B. Catalogue of the Works of Velazquez and Murillo. 1883.

FORD, RICHARD. Handbook for Spain.

JUSTI, CARL. Diego Velazquez and his Times. 1889.

N.B. This is the chief work on the life of the artist.

PACHECO, FRANCISCO. El Arte de la Pintura. 1649.

STEVENSON, R. A. M. The Art of Velazquez. 1898.

N.B. A profound study on the art of Velazquez, of the greatest importance to the student.

STIRLING-MAXWELL, SIR W. Velazquez and his Works. 1885.

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STOWE, EDWIN. Velazquez. 1895.

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